

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: AF/S-RJDOLS

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AF-JWFOLEY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

UNCLAS STATE 244550

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAPE TOWN 709 ACTION SECSTATE INFO DURBAN
JOHANNESBURG LONDON PRETORIA DTD 04 NOV

QTE

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0709

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS :PFOR,MARR,SF,UK

SUBJ :SA PRESS GIVES PROMINENT COVERAGE TO REPORT THAT
UK WILL ABROGATE SIMONSTOWN PACT

1. MONDAY MORNING NEWSPAPERS IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE FEATURING
REPORTS FROM LONDON THAT LABOR GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO END
SIMONSTOWN AGREEMENT. RAND DAILY MAIL SAID DECISION WAS TAKEN
IN CABINET MEETING THURSDAY AND WAS LEAKED TO PRESS TO MOLLIFY
GROWING ANGER IN LEFT WING OF LABOR PARTY. MAIL ARTICLE SAID
U.S.DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS 'ADMITTED'THAT U.S. WOULD
VERY MUCH LIKE TO USE SIMONSTOWN.

2. IN CAPE TOWN, AFRIKAANS NEWSPAPER DIE BURGER SPECULATED
THAT BRITISH CABINET WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS ENDING SIMONSTOWN
AGREEMENT WITH WESTERN ALLIES. DIE BURGER SAID,'IT IS WELL-
KNOWN THAT THERE IS STRONG FEELING IN NATO THAT THE DEFENSE
OF THE CAPE SEA ROUTE IS HIGH PRIORITY.' IT ADDED THAT
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U.S.AND FRENCH WOULD CRITIZE BRITISH FOR DECISION ON SIMONSTOWN.

3. CAPE TIMES CARRIED SPECULATION ON U.S.AND FRENCH REACTION
ANOTHER STEP FURTHER, SAYING THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES'ARE
REPORTED TO BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO TAKE THE PLACE OF THE ROYAL
NAVY AT SIMONSTOWN.' TIMES REPORTED SOUTH AFRICAN MIN DEFENSE
P.W.BOTHA SAID LAST NIGHT THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED OF REPORTS
FROM LONDON ON ABROGATION OF SIMONSTOWN AGREEMENT BUT THAT HE
HAD NO COMMENT TO MAKE AT THIS TIME.
EDMONDSONUNQTE INGERSOLL

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